



Small Projects Day, Section 1: Project Proposal

1. **Responsible Official:** John Sinclair, Forest Supervisor, Green Mountain National Forest
2. **Project Name:** GMP Goshen Dam Power/Fiber Special Use Permit
3. **Project Location:** U.S. Tract # 199D, Goshen Dam Road, Town of Goshen, Addison County, Vermont
4. **Project Contact:** Jen Edmonds, Natural Resource Specialist, (802)-747-6746, jennifer.edmonds@usda.gov
5. **Purpose and Need** (*Why here? Why now? Why is the outcome desired?*): The purpose and need of this project is to respond to an application submitted by Green Mountain Power (GMP) to install electric line and fiber optic cable to Goshen Dam. Electrical and fiber optic cables are necessary for safe operation of the existing Goshen Dam at the Sugar Hill Reservoir. The project would enable remote sensing of water levels and flows at the dam and would enable remote operation of valves and gates in order to manage water more promptly and safely in the event of storms and high water events. The proposed facilities must be located on National Forest System Lands in order to connect the dam to the electrical grid, because the dam is surrounded by National Forest System Lands. This work is proposed in association with work planned on GMP land to complete Federal Energy Regulatory Commission required spillway and penstock repairs at the Goshen Dam.
6. **Project Description** (*What will we be doing? How will we do it? Where is the project located?*): This project would include issuance of a special use permit for a term of two years that would authorize the construction of a primary voltage underground electric line and fiber optic cable line along the access road from the Goshen-Ripton Road to GMP property at Goshen Dam starting in June of 2020. The portion of the lines on National Forest lands would consist of conduit, terminating cabinets, and fiber pull vaults. Power and cable would be buried in separate parallel conduits and extend approximately 4,617 feet on National Forest Lands along the Goshen-Ripton Road to the National Forest Boundary near the gatehouse at Goshen Dam, running along Goshen Dam access road in the right of way that GMP holds. This easement allows for the road but does not allow for utilities. Once construction is completed the electric and fiber optic cable lines would be added to GMP's Master Permit.

Conduit Trench: A trench that is approximately 4,617 feet long, 18-24 inches wide and 36-48 inches deep would be dug along the Goshen Dam access road from the junction with the Goshen-Ripton Road to the Forest Service/GMP property boundary. This trench would be in the previously disturbed area beside the Access Road, within GMP's road easement and would require no cutting of trees. Two parallel two-inch diameter pvc conduits (one for power, one for fiber-optic cable) would be buried within this trench. If the trench could not be dug to the proper depth, the conduit would be encased in concrete.

Secondary hand holes/ fiber pull boxes: Five fiber pull boxes would be installed along the trench line to access fiber and electrical line as shown on attached map.



Terminating Cabinet: Two terminating cabinets would be installed for the electrical line as shown on the attached map. Each cabinet would have a 48 inch by 56 inch foundation, as shown on attached spec sheets; the cabinet would be six inches above grade.

The following mitigation measures would be included in this permit:

Heritage

If cultural and/or paleontological resources (historic or prehistoric sites or objects) are discovered during project implementation, all work adjacent to the discovery would be halted immediately. The Forest Archaeologist would be notified and follow Forest Service Policies for inadvertent discovery. The permit holder would suspend all operations in the immediate area of such discovery until written authorization to proceed is issued by the GMNF Heritage staff.

Non-Native Invasive Plants

Equipment and vehicles would avoid infestations of wild chervil adjacent to the work area, when possible. If equipment travels through an infestation of wild chervil to implement the project, the equipment must be cleaned on site prior to leaving the site to prevent spread of wild chervil. Cleaning can be accomplished on site by whatever method is feasible (e.g., portable power washing or a stiff broom to remove plant debris or mud that may contain plant debris).

Soils

Disturbed soils would be stabilized with native seed and certified weed-free mulch following Forest Plan Non-Native Invasive Species Standards and Guidelines. The permit administrator would be contacted for seed source suggestions, or use the following mix at a rate of 30 lbs/acre:

30% creeping fescue (*Festuca rubra*)
20% little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*)
25% side oats gramma grass (*Bouteloua curtipendula*)
25% Virginia wild rye (*Elmus virginicus*)

Timber

No cutting of trees would be authorized by this permit. In the event that unplanned tree cutting is deemed necessary, prior written approval must be obtained from the Forest Service.

Wildlife

Construction crews would inspect trench prior to refilling with soil to inspect for amphibians and other small animals.

Recreation

Construction activities would not result in closure of the Goshen Dam Trail during the snowmobile season (December 16 – April 15).

Signage would be posted at the junction of Forest Road 32 and the Goshen Dam Road to alert the public about limited/prohibited access periods for Sugar Hill Reservoir.

7. Forest Plan Management Area: Moosalamoo Recreation and Education Area



- 8. Forest Plan Compliance** (*How does this project comply with the Land & Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) direction?*): Management area guidelines state that “Expansion of existing facilities and corridors for utility lines and pipelines should not be encouraged, and Reconstruction, upgrading, or maintenance of existing utility lines and facilities should be designed and implemented to be as compatible as possible with visual quality objectives, management purposes, and values for the area. This project is necessary for the safe operation of an existing dam, within a previously disturbed area.
- 9. Exclusion Category:** 36 CFR 220.6 (e)(3) Approval, modification, or continuation of minor special uses of NFS lands that require less than five contiguous acres of land.
- 10. Expected Implementation Date:** May 2020

